

12 August 1977

Soc 401.2 The Untold Story of

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WASHINGTON (UPI) -- THE "MOST SHAMEFUL FAILURE OF THE ISRAELI SECRET SERVICES," ACCORDING TO A NEW BOOK ON ISRAEL, WAS ITS INABILITY TO PREDICT THE LIGHTNING EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN ATTACK IN 1973 KNOWN AS THE YOM KIPPUR WAR.

IT APPEARS THAT MENACHEM BEGIN, THEN A MEMBER OF THE KNESSET AND NOW ISRAEL'S PRIME MINISTER, WAS ONE OF THE FEW ISRAELIS WHO DOUBTED INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THAT AN ATTACK WAS A "REMOTE POSSIBILITY," ACCORDING TO THE BOOK "THE UNTOLD HISTORY OF ISRAEL."

AN UNDERGROUND LEADER IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE BRITISH DURING THEIR PALESTINE PROTECTORATE, BEGIN KEPT REPEATING, "ARAB LOGIC IS NOT THE SAME AS OURS. YOU CAN NEVER KNOW WHY THEY WILL SUDDENLY DECIDE TO SET OFF WAR."

BUT GEN. ELI ZEIRA, CHIEF OF AMAN, ISRAEL'S MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, INSISTED WAR WAS A "REMOTE POSSIBILITY" RIGHT UP TO THE MORNING OF OCT. 6, 1973, YOM KIPPUR, THE MOST SACRED DAY OF THE JEWISH LITURGICAL CALENDAR.

THE CIA, WHICH HAD THOUGHT WAR POSSIBLE 10 DAYS EARLIER, REVERSED ITS OPINION AND ASSERTED THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO CROSS THE SUEZ CANAL WAS "A TECHNICAL FEAT WELL BEYOND THE EGYPTIANS' CAPACITY," ACCORDING TO AUTHORS JACQUES DEROGY AND HESI CARMEL.

ON OCT. 6 AT 4 A.M., THE BOOK RECOUNTS, DEFENSE MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN "WAS AWAKENED BY A PHONE CALL FROM THE MOSSAD (ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE) ANNOUNCING A COMBINED EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN ATTACK BEFORE SUNSET."

THE ISRAELIS ULTIMATELY STOPPED THE ASSAULT AND TURNED IT AROUND.

A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY CONCLUDED FOUR YEARS LATER THE ISRAELI ARMY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE HAD REMAINED BLINDLY ATTACHED TO ITS ERRONEOUS EVALUATIONS.

"IN THE 30 YEARS SINCE 1948, THE TWO MAIN CENTRAL AGENCIES -- THE CIA AND THE KGB -- HAVE HAD THEIR DOZEN OR SO RESOUNDING FAILURES," THE AUTHORS CLAIM.

"BUT THE UNPREPAREDNESS BEFORE THE YOM KIPPUR WAR REMAINS, ABOVE ALL, THE MOST SHAMEFUL FAILURE OF THE ISRAELI SECRET SERVICES, OR RATHER THAT OF AMAN. THE ARMY'S INTELLIGENCE SERVICE WHICH HAD TAKEN THE LEAD ABOVE THE OTHERS.

"IT WAS NOT ONLY A TOTAL MISCALCULATION OF THE EGYPTIAN-SYRIAN MILITARY PLANS, IT WAS WORSE: THE BREAKING DOWN OF A DEFENSE SYSTEM WHICH WAS BADLY IN NEED OF REPAIR AFTER YEARS AND YEARS OF EXCELLENT SERVICE WHICH HAD QUIETLY BECOME ROUTINE."

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